

ELECTRONIC MAIL

Approved By: Kenneth Burton Chief of Police
CALEA 6th Edition Standard:

212 ELECTRONIC MAIL

212.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the proper use and application of the electronic mail (e-mail) system provided by the Department. E-mail is a communication tool available to employees to enhance efficiency in the performance of job duties. It is to be used in accordance with generally accepted business practices and current law (e.g. Missouri public records laws). Messages transmitted over the e-mail system must only be those that involve official business activities or that contain information essential to employees for the accomplishment of business-related tasks and/or communications directly related to the business, administration or practices of the Department.

212.2 E-MAIL RIGHT OF PRIVACY

All e-mail messages, including any attachments, transmitted over the department computer network or accessed through a web browser accessing the department system are considered department records and therefore are the property of the Department, and possibly subject to the Missouri Sunshine Law. The Department reserves the right to access, audit and disclose for any lawful reason, any message including any attachment that is transmitted or received over its e-mail system or that is stored on any department system.

The e-mail system is not a confidential system since all communications transmitted on, to or from the system are the property of the Department, and possibly subject to the Missouri Sunshine Law. Therefore, the e-mail system is not appropriate for confidential or personal communications. Employees using the department e-mail system shall have no expectation of privacy concerning communications transmitted over the system.

Employees should not use personal accounts to exchange e-mail or other information that is related to the official business of the Department. The use of any computer, internet service, phone service or other wireless service to send or receive information that may be related to public business may be subject to review or disclosure.

212.3 PROHIBITED USE OF E-MAIL

Sending derogatory, defamatory, obscene, disrespectful, sexually suggestive, harassing or any other inappropriate messages on the e-mail system is prohibited and may result in discipline.

E-mail messages addressed to the entire Department are only to be used for official business-related items that are of particular interest to all users. Users are reminded that all e-mail is subject to review and scrutiny with regard to appropriate content or violation of any prohibitions. In the event that a user has questions

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about sending a particular e-mail communication, the user should seek prior approval from the Chief of Police or a Bureau Commander. Personal advertisements or announcements are not permitted.

It is a violation of this policy to transmit a message under another user's name or e-mail address or to use the password of another to log into the system. Users are required to log off the network or secure the workstation when the computer is unattended. This added security measure will minimize the potential misuse of an individual's e-mail, name and/or password by others.

212.4 MANAGEMENT OF E-MAIL

Because the end user e-mail system is not designed for, nor does it support, long-term retention and archiving of messages, e-mail that an employee desires to save or that requires retention should be printed and/or stored in another database designed for long-term storage and retrieval.

Users of e-mail are solely responsible for the management of their mailboxes.

212.5 E-MAIL RECORD MANAGEMENT

E-mail may, depending upon the individual content, be a record under the Missouri Sunshine Laws and must be managed in accordance with the organization's adopted records retention, archiving and destruction policy in compliance with state law (§ 610.010, RSMo; § 109.180, RSMo).

212.6 MASS E-MAIL

A department head will designate key individuals in the department or its division to send mass emails. Those individuals will be given instructions on how to access the mass email distribution list. Requests to send mass emails should be approved by the department head and distributed by the department head or these key personnel.

Individuals approved to send mass messages should follow these guidelines:

- Mass emails shall only be used for City business/activities.
- Attachments should be avoided.
- The mass email distribution list shall be blind copied (bcc) for security reasons.
- Mass emails shall have a subject line.

Any employee of the City of Columbia found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Any external agency found to have violated this policy may have its access revoked and may be legally liable for damages. (IT Mass Email Policy)